



News Release

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Maine Owner of Environmental Services Firm National Small Business Person of the Year

California, Massachusetts State Winners are Runners-Up

WASHINGTON – Marianne Sensale-Guerin of Gorham, Maine, who took over an environmental services company she had founded nine years earlier and then sold to a larger firm, and turned it into a top-notch business specializing in mitigating fuel spills and leaks, was recognized as *National Small Business Person of the Year* by President George W. Bush during ceremonies today at *SBA Expo '05*, the agency's three-day conference celebrating National Small Business Week.

"Each year the SBA chooses one business owner who best exemplifies the qualities that make our 25-million strong small business owners the economic force they are," said SBA Administrator Hector V. Barreto. "Marianne, and her company Guerin Associates, embody the best of entrepreneurship, citizenship, and the American dream. And I am proud to name her the National Small Business Person of the Year."

First runner-up is Craig Curran, president and owner of Smart Systems Technologies, Inc., of Irvine, Calif. Second runner-up is Frederick J. Curtis Jr., president and CEO of Curtis Tractor Cab, Inc., of Worcester, Mass.

Established in December 2000, Sensale-Guerin's company, Guerin Associates, LLC, is an environmental services firm that offers a wide range of remedial services. The company specializes in the removal, replacement, cleaning and retrofitting of underground and above ground fuel storage tanks. Guerin Associates also provides 24-hour emergency spill response as well as hazardous and contaminated site remediation services to government, corporate and private clients.

Sensale-Guerin, a New Jersey native, moved to Maine in April 1981. While working for an oil company as finance manager, from 1986 – 1989, she gained working knowledge of environmental risks and regulations, particularly those governing underground fuel storage tanks.

In 1991, Marianne and her husband, Marc, formed Pollution Control Services (PCS), a small environmental company based in Gorham. They sold the company's assets in 1999 to North American Environmental Services and both Marc and Marianne accepted managerial positions with the company, Marc in Maine, and Marianne in New York. She returned to run the company's environmental division in Maine in November 2000, after her husband was killed in an industrial accident, leaving Marianne devastated and heart-broken.

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Six weeks later, North American decided to close the Maine division, and Marianne, not afraid of facing a challenge, struck a deal that allowed her to take over its existing federal contracts and perform them under a new entity, Guerin Associates, LLC, which she formed in December 2000.

Presently, Sensale-Guerin is the sole owner and President of Guerin Associates and she continues to grow the company both in diversity of services and revenue. During its four years in business, the company has grown from four employees to its current 20. The main office is an 8,000-square-foot newly-renovated facility located on New Portland Road in Gorham and has a branch office in Presque Isle, which was established in 2002.

Craig Curran, the first runner-up, got the idea for his company when he and his wife walked into a homebuilder's design center and were told about amenities ranging from tile, to carpets to cabinetry – but not a word about wiring systems. Since his background was in low-voltage wiring, the meeting gave Curran an idea for a new company specializing in integrated wiring systems needed to run new homes with all the latest technology, known as “structural wiring.”

Structural wiring (TV, telephone, data networking), digitally enhanced surround sound and home theater, whole house audio and home automation are some of the specialized technologies offered by the company. About 95 percent of the company's business involves installation of systems during construction of new homes.

Shortly thereafter, in May 1999, Curran, a native of Fresno, formed Smart Systems Technologies, Inc. (SST) as a partnership with his father and brother. By December, he had two employees and sales of \$380,000. Now, just six years later, SST generates \$16 million in revenues annually with a growing staff of 169 employees. Last year the company completed 6,500 installations, and the market continues to grow.

Second runner-up Fred Curtis Jr., took over the company founded by his father in 1969, and has turned it into a powerhouse both domestically and internationally, with revenues in excess of \$44 million, 220 skilled and semi-skilled workers, and a 140,000-square-foot world-class manufacturing facility on Higgins Street in Worcester.

Today, the company, which initially operated out of a small garage in Worcester, designs, manufactures and distributes tractor and utility vehicle cab enclosures, and a broad spectrum of related products including state-of-the-art cab enclosures with numerous features and options, various types of plows, plow attachments, sanders, and spreaders.

Curtis derives its revenues from a combination of aftermarket, dealer direct sales and OEM sales where Curtis private labels products for companies like John Deere, Kubota Tractor and Kawasaki Motor Corp. The business is supported by a strong proprietary R&D shop which consists of eight full-time design engineers led by Curtis himself.

The national small business awards are a highlight of *SBA Expo '05*, the agency's annual celebration honoring the nation's leading small business entrepreneurs, co-sponsored by SCORE, “Counselors to America's Small Business.”

The winners are selected on their record of stability, growth in employment and sales, financial condition, innovation, response to adversity, and community service. For more information on these companies and on the rest of the state Small Business Person of the Year award winners, visit the SBA Web site at <http://www.sba.gov/expo/> and click on “2005 Winners.”